

ALTERNATIVE WORK SCHEDULES

Compressed Work Weeks / Flextime

What is an alternative work schedule?

As defined by local CTR ordinances, alternative work schedules are compressed work weeks that allow an employee to work longer hours in fewer days. The employee eliminates at least one day of commuting every other week by working four ten-hour days in a week, or 80 hours over nine days.

Alternative work schedules, sometimes referred to as “Flextime,” are voluntary and are established by agreement between the employee and supervisor.

What are the benefits of an alternative work schedule?

To Employers:

- may result in longer operating hours and expanded service for customers;
- enables business communications among different time zones;
- improves internal communication processes;
- enables cross-training opportunities for employees which can increase efficiency and productivity;
- reduces employee absenteeism and improves morale;
- offers an attractive benefit to recruit and retain employees;
- eliminates commute trips to the work site.

To Employees:

- creates more time for family, home, hobbies and community work;
- provides cross-training opportunities;
- allows “off-peak” (non-rush hour) commute times;
- decreases time spent commuting.

What are favorable conditions for alternative work schedules?

Compressed week schedules or Flextime are most effective when:

- informal compressed work week schedules are used to create a formal program benefit available to a greater number of employees;
- businesses will benefit from extended work hours;
- job functions are identified that are conducive to a compressed work week schedule;
- employees use the schedule flexibility to shift to, or to continue using, an alternative type of transportation;
- employee groups want more control of their schedules.

How do alternative work schedules help meet CTR goals?

Each trip eliminated by a compressed work week schedule reduces the number of single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) trips to worksites, enabling employers to achieve or maintain their CTR goals.

(more)

How much does it cost to offer alternative work schedules?

Out-of-pocket costs usually are minimal. If alternative work schedules result in extended business hours, on-going costs such as utilities, security, or maintenance are usually minimal. These costs, however, may be offset by financial gains from client transactions conducted during longer hours or by making long distance calls or faxes at lower-cost times.

Answers to commonly asked questions:

- Q. Is it confusing to have people coming and going at different times? Is it time-consuming and costly to keep track of who should be at work? What about meetings or responsibilities that require all employees to be present?***
- A.** Many employers set standard hours or days when all employees are expected to be on the job. Standardized schedules are consistent and predictable. Many employers require employees to maintain a standard schedule for a set period of time. Co-workers can establish ways to track each other's schedules.
- Q. My management is concerned that employees who work compressed work weeks will abuse the system. For example, some employees seem to read the newspaper rather than work during their early hours.***
- A.** Normally, when supervisors and employees understand the purpose of the program and establish clear expectations at its start, abuse is not a problem. It may be necessary to establish ground rules and procedures at some worksites to assure that work is getting done. Abuse by one or a few people may require action with those individuals, not discontinuing the program for those who use it effectively.
- Q. Do employees who work a normal schedule have to pick up the slack for those employees who work alternative work weeks?***
- A.** Employees with alternative schedules still must get their work done. If this does not happen, it may be a problem with the individual's productivity, rather than the alternative schedule. For jobs that require public or client contact, alternative work schedules often offer the advantage of extended business hours without the drawback of greater personnel expenses.